Automotive News

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Deepening auto recession is Story of Year for 1981

By John K. Teahen Jr.
Managing Editor

At long last, 1981 has ended. And not a moment too soon, as far as the domestic auto industry is concerned.

It was an awful year. *Another* awful year, because 1980 certainly was no prize either.

The unhappy state of affairs dominated the AUTOMOTIVE NEWS editorial staff's 29th annual Story of the Year poll. Just about every story mentioned was related to the troubles of the U. S. makers.

Voted Story of the Year for 1981 was the continuing recession/depression in the domestic auto industry.

In second place was the early campaign by General Motors and Ford Motor Co. to reduce labor costs in the 1982 contract with the UAW. It's something that wouldn't have happened in days of prosperity.

Third place went to the voluntary agreement by the Japanese makers to limit auto exports to the U. S. Once more, an event triggered by Detroit's troubles.

The fourth-place story was "sticker shock" — the buyer rebellion against the high, and ever-increasing prices of new domestic autos.

In fifth place was the era of deregulation that has begun under the Reagan Administration. Would there be deregulation if the industry were healthy?

• Looking at vehicle sales and the financial results of the U. S. auto firms, it's extremely difficult to find anything good to say about 1981. "Recession" is a mild term for what happened. "Depression" describes it better.

Domestic new-car sales were very poor, the worst since 1961. The year's total was about 6,240,000, down some 5 percent from 1980's 6,578,309. And 1980, itself was a disaster.

Of last year's 35 10-day sales periods through Dec. 20, 13 were ahead of 1980 and 22 were down. But the 13 "ups" don't mean much; they're a comparison of two rotten years. The 22 "downs" are a more telling statistic.

Five of the first 11 months (March, May, June, August, September) were better than in 1980, but, again, it's a comparison of weakness vs. weakness. August, fueled by rebates and GM's reduced interest rates, showed a 24-percent gain; the other improvements were 7 percent or less.

Only one 10-day sales record was set in 1981. That was in mid-March when GM's $500 and $700 rebates were at their peak. But the cost of that record was prohibitive. AUTOMOTIVE NEWS estimated that GM's sales for March 11-20 cost $85 million — $50 million for the corporation's share of the rebates and $35 million for its dealers' share.

The auto companies and their dealers poured hundreds of millions of dollars into rebates and incentives during the year. All that cash didn't boost the industry's sales, but maybe it kept things from getting even worse.

Chrysler Corp. ran counter to the industry trend, showing a 14-percent rise in car sales for the first 11 months. But, alas, it wasn't enough to keep the com-

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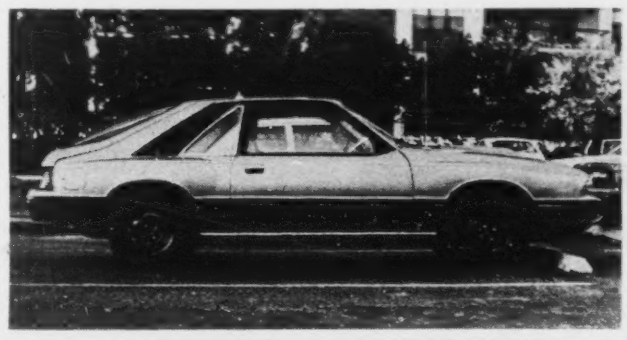
New faces at Ford

Mustang, Capri restyled for '83

Ford Mustang and Mercury Capri will receive a facelift and tail lamp change for the 1983 model year, as shown in these unofficial photos. The new Mustang nose is shown above. In addition, the Capri hatchback gets a bubble-back rear window, a la Mercury LN7. It is the first styling change for those cars since their introduction as all-new models in the '79 model year.



GM's McDonald to be keynoter for NADA

F. James McDonald, president of General Motors, will be the keynote speaker when the 65th annual NADA Convention & Exposition opens Feb. 20 in Atlanta.

The convention will run through Tuesday, Feb. 23, at the Georgia World Congress Center.

At the opening session on Saturday, Wendell H. Miller, 1981 president of NADA, will report on his term of office.

At the general session on Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 23, the incoming president, George W. Lyles, a Chevrolet and Rolls-Royce dealer in High Point, N. C., will accept the NADA gavel for 1982.

Also speaking at the Tuesday afternoon session will be Senator Paul Laxalt, Nevada Republican, and Paul Harvey, the commentator.

Time Magazine Quality Dealer Awards will be presented at the opening session on Saturday.

• On Tuesday, Feb. 23, at 7 p.m., NADA will host a Diamond Dinner and Reception in the Atlanta Hilton Grand Ballroom for DEAC contributors.

The Diamond Dinner and Reception will feature two musical aggregations, Tex Beneke and his Orchestra and Danny Davis and the Nashville Brass.

Although the convention does not officially open until Feb. 20, early registrations will begin at 1:30 p.m. on Feb. 19.

Registration desks also will be open from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Saturday (Feb. 20); from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Sunday and Monday and from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

Workshops and make meetings will be held on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Workshops this year are organized into four areas of interest. They are Sales/Rental, Service/Parts/Body, Personnel/Management and Business/Money.

The workshop sessions will zero in on such areas as finding used vehicles, advertising tips, vehicle inventory control, starting a leasing company, developing service professionals, estate planning, preventing embezzlement, training sales personnel, computer talk, controlling expenses and corporate cash management.

Also, used-vehicle pricing, profits in daily rental, the AUTOCAP answer, daily operating control, understanding body language, dealership acquisition, hot legal topics, NADA Sales Trak, NADA service systems and analysis, financial statement analysis and LIFO implementation.

• The equipment exposition will be open from 8:30 a.m. until 2:45 p.m. on Saturday; from 11:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Sunday; 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Monday, and 9 a.m. until noon on Tuesday.

The Life Style Center will be open in the World Congress Center each day of the convention, with special attractions for women. Theme of the Life Style Center will be Springtime in Atlanta and the center will feature a sidewalk cafe, fortune tellers, artists, crafts and sports professionals.

At 3:30 p.m. Monday, Actress Polly Bergen will talk on "The Psychology of Being a Woman." Earlier that day, at 10 a.m., there will be a fashion show.

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Service Index charts year's 2nd-biggest gain

By Francis J. Gawronski
Service Editor

With all indicators reporting in on the plus side, new-car service and parts business in November scored its second biggest increase of the year.

As measured by the Automotive News Service Index, service and parts volume in November amounted to 110.6 percent of the business recorded in the same month of 1980.

November's showing in the shops was the best since June when the Service Index was 116.6 percent of the volume recorded in the same month the year before.

November also marked the ninth consecutive month in which shop business bettered the volume done in the year-earlier month.

The leading indicator in November was gross profit on all labor, parts and P&A sales — the most important indicator from the dealers' viewpoint. It was up 17.8 percent for its best showing since June when profits were up 21.2 percent. In October, this indicator was up 8.5 percent.

Sales of all parts and P&A were up 12.1 percent in November, followed by shop parts sales (those used in customer-paid and warranty repairs), up 11.7 percent.

Total labor sales (customer-paid and warranty) were up 10.7 percent, while repair orders written were up 0.2 percent.

Figures used in the Service Index are averages compiled from reports on shop business from a cross-section of the nation's new-car dealers.

Service and parts business in

Continued on Page 2, Col. 3

breaking news

Pontiac eyes high-performance 1.8-liter

PONTIAC.—Pontiac is toying with a fuel-injected and turbocharged version of the Brazilian-built 1.8-liter overhead-cam four-cylinder engine that it will offer in the J2000 model —sans the extra performance hardware—this spring. The engine is strictly experimental, a Pontiac source said, but could show up in 1984-model J2000s if okayed by GM.

McCurry to head Toyota L.A. region

TORRANCE, Calif. — Robert B. McCurry has joined Toyota as general manager of the Los Angeles region, a new position. McCurry recently resigned as general manager of Mid-Atlantic Toyota, an independent distributorship that handles Toyota products in a five-state area. Before that, McCurry had served 28 years with Chrysler Corp. He took a voluntary retirement from Chrysler in 1978 as group vice president in charge of North American sales, parts and service.

See BREAKING NEWS, Page 2 Col. 1

Auto setback is less severe in Canada, report on pact says

WASHINGTON. — Auto production, sales and employment were down to a much greater extent in the U. S. than in Canada during calendar 1980, according to the just-issued 15th annual report to Congress on the working of the 1965 Auto Products Trade Act.

Under the 1965 agreement to rationalize auto production and trade between the U. S. and Canada, the U. S. gave duty-free treatment to certain vehicles and original-equipment parts for auto companies operating in Canada—the Big Four U. S. companies that had agreed to increase Canadian content in their production.

Total North American production in 1980 fell 28 percent from the 1979 level. U. S. production declined 30 percent and Canadian production only 16 percent. U. S. car production dropped 24 percent. U. S. truck production fell 46 percent. Canadian car production fell 14 percent. Canadian truck production fell 18 percent.

In the U. S., sales of overseas imports rose 3 percent to a record of 2.39 million. In Canada, sales of overseas imports rose 37 percent to 191,000.

The truck market was affected more severely than the car market. In the U. S., sales of North American trucks fell 33 percent in 1980 while sales of imports rose 4 percent. In Canada, sales of North American trucks dropped 19 percent while sales of imported trucks rose 75 percent.

The Big Four auto makers in 1980 spent $5.951 billion for new plant and equipment—up 7 percent from 1979. The Canadian share was a record $827 million, up 139 percent from 1979. Investment in the U. S. was $5.124 billion, down slightly from the 1979 peak of $5.203 billion.

In both countries, prices — both wholesale and retail—continued to rise. In the U. S. during 1980, the producer price index rose 8.4 percent from year-earlier levels for cars, 10.0 percent for trucks and 11.9 percent for parts.

In Canada, the industrial selling price index rose 12.4 percent for cars, 11.1 percent for trucks and 10.5 percent for parts.

In the U. S., the consumer price index for cars rose 8.0 percent, compared with a 7.9-percent rise recorded in 1979. In Canada, the consumer price index rose 11.8 percent compared with 12.1 percent in 1979.

In 1980, combined employment in both countrise dropped 22 percent below the 1979 level. The drop was much sharper in the U. S., whose share of total employment was 90 percent.

Vehicles and parts trade between the countries also reflected the state of the industry, dropping 12 percent from 1979 to $19.4 billion.

During 1980, U. S. auto products exports to Canada fell 14 percent, while corresponding Canadian exports to the U. S. declined 9 percent. The U. S. trade surplus was $1.75 billion, substantially below the $2.56 billion surplus of 1979. The U. S. surplus in duty-free auto products declined to $1.818 billion from $2.432 billion in 1979. The surplus in dutiable auto products dropped to $45 million in 1980 from $127 million in 1979.

Despite the sharp decline in total auto-products trade between the countries, the Canadian surplus in assembled vehicles rose $900 million. This was because U. S. vehicle exports to Canada dropped 18-percent while the value of U. S.-vehicle imports remained at the 1979 level.

Although the total parts trade for the U. S. and Canada declined 16 percent, the U. S. surplus in parts remained at almost the 1979 level.

U. S. shipments of auto products to Canada declined 14 percent; Canadian shipments declined 9 percent.

Ford's Hawaiian punch

Ford Dealers in Northern California, Southern Oregon and Western Nevada are running a "25 Fabulous Trips for 2" January promotion. On location in Hawaii for the commercial shoot are, from left, Bob Roat, account supervisor, J. Walter Thompson; John Allen, actor; Don Vaughn, JWT art director; Hugh Trenkamp, JWT management supervisor on the dealer account, and Madeline Press, actress. TV, radio, newspaper and point-of-purchase are included in the promotion.

Industry shuts down 29 plants this week

The Big Three U. S. auto makers are further juggling their January production schedules in response to continued sluggish new-car sales and bulging inventories.

As of today (Jan. 4), the Big Three will have 29 assembly plants closed. All but one of Ford Motor's 17 vehicle assembly plants and all five Chrysler Corp. car plants are closed this week to trim inventories.

Only Ford Wixom (Mich.) which builds Lincoln and Mark VI, will be open this week. St. Louis and the Lorain (O.) and Michigan (Wayne, Mich.) truck plants will resume operations Jan. 11. Other Ford car and truck points will remain down until Jan. 18, a Ford official said.

General Motors reported eight of its 32 vehicle assembly plants completely or partially closed this week. Down are Flint (Buick G-body line only) and GMAD Framingham, Lakewood, Linden, Tarrytown, Wilmington, Arlington and Janesville.

All except Janesville are closed for adjustment of new-car stocks. Janesville will be down for most of January for model changeover.

Arlington, Linden and Flint will reopen Jan. 11, but at that time GM will close its Baltimore, Fremont and South Gate plants. Baltimore and South Gate will reopen Jan. 18; Fremont will remain down that week. In addition, GM will close Lordstown (O.), beginning Jan. 18, for inventory adjustment.

Although all Chrysler Corp. assembly plants are closed this week, all but Newark (N. J.) will reopen next Monday (Jan. 11). Newark will remain down until Jan. 18.

Daihatsu to sell Innocenti in Common Market countries

TOKYO. — Daihatsu Motors, the Toyota affiliate, is to market Italian Innocenti cars in the European Common Market, the company has announced.

Daihatsu has already agreed to supply its three-cylinder 1-liter engine and transaxle to replace the much heavier BL A Series unit used previously in the Innocenti range of subcompact front-wheel-drive sedans.

Daihatsu started shipping engine/transaxles to Innocenti in Italy in September at the rate of about 4,000 units a month. Approximately 60 percent of the cars built with Daihatsu engines will be sold by Daihatsu dealers, the remainder going through the Innocenti network.

Since the Innocenti cars look completely different from the Daihatsu Charade, they are considered to be complementary to the Charade and Cuore models. The Innocenti Mini is based on the mechanical units and floorpan of the BL Mini, the new body having been designed when BL was manufacturing in Italy.

Now Innocenti is moving away from BL, and the implications are that in future, the links between the Italian and Japanese company will be much closer.

For example, at the Tokyo Motor Show, Daihatsu showed a 'de Tomaso Turbo' version of the Charade, de Tomaso being the man who owns the Innocenti operation.

With a turbocharger and sporty bolt-on parts, this show special was intended to help give Daihatsu a more sporty image.

SERVICE INDEX
110.6*

	Nov., '81 vs. Nov., '80	11 mos., '81 vs. 11 mos., '80
Gross Profit on All Labor and P&A Sales	+17.8%	+ 9.7%
Repair Orders Written	+ 0.2%	— 3.3%
Total Labor Sales (Customer & Warranty)	+10.7%	+ 3.5%
Shop Parts Sales (Customer & Warranty)	+11.7%	+ 6.4%
Sales of All P&A	+12.1%	+ 8.6%

*—Survey by Automotive News shows that dealers' service and parts business in Nov., 1981, was 110.6 percent of business in Nov., 1980. Service business in the three months of 1981 was 105.4 percent of business in the corresponding period in 1980.

Service Index charts year's 2nd biggest gain

Continued from Page 1

the first 11 months of 1981 amounted to 105.4 percent of the volume recorded in the same period a year ago. Shop business in the 10-month period was up 105.0 percent.

Gross profit was the leading indicator in the January-November period, up 9.7 percent, followed by sales of all parts and P&A, up 8.6 percent, and shop parts sales, up 6.4 percent.

Labor sales were up 3.5 percent for the period, while repair orders written dipped 3.3 percent.

Mid-month car sales scantiest since 1959

By Jenny L. King
Staff Writer

Domestic new-car sales in mid-December remained at basement levels, further widening the year-to-date gap between 1981 and 1980 and scoring the worst daily sales average of the year.

Dec. 11-20 sales totaled 104,754, down 31.23 percent from 152,316 a year ago. It was lowest for the pre-holiday period since the 99,869 recorded back in 1959. The mid-December record is 256,981 in 1972.

The year-to-date figure finally pushed over the 6-million mark, to 6,079,698, 5.51 percent below the 6,434,081 tallied through Dec. 20, 1980.

The daily sales rate for the eight days in the period was just 13,094, lowest for the year to date and down 22.63 percent from 16,924 for nine days a year earlier.

All five major U. S. auto makers were down in the period, both on year-to-year comparisons and on a daily-rate scale. General Motors was down 24.01 percent, to 64,718 from 85,162 in 1980 (down 14.50 percent daily rate). Ford Motor Co. reported sales of 20,942 units, down 48.14 percent from 40,380 (down 41.65 percent daily rate).

Chrysler Corp. sales of 14,309 were down 26.73 percent from 19,529 a year earlier (down 17.55 percent daily rate). Volkswagen of America slipped 24.96 percent, to 2,585 from 3,445 (down 15.61 percent daily rate), and estimated American Motors sales of 2,200 new passenger cars were down 42.11 percent from 3,800 (down 34.89 percent daily rate).

DOMESTIC SALES

	Dec. 11-20, 1981	Dec. 11-20, 1980
AMERICAN MOTORS	2,200	3,800
Chrysler	2,704	3,863
Imperial	72	199
Plymouth	5,700	7,821
Dodge	5,833	7,646
CHRYSLER CORP.	14,309	19,529
Ford	14,259	27,356
Mercury	5,367	11,082
Lincoln	1,316	1,942
FORD MOTOR	20,942	40,380
Buick	13,654	12,023
Cadillac	5,064	5,964
Chevrolet	22,940	36,108
Oldsmobile	14,189	18,048
Pontiac	7,871	13,019
GENERAL MOTORS	64,718	85,162
VOLKSWAGEN	2,585	3,445
INDUSTRY TOTAL	104,754	152,316

†Estimate

• GM earned 61.78 percent of the mid-month market, up from 55.91 percent a year earlier. Ford dropped down to 19.99 percent from 26.51 percent. Chrysler inched to 13.66 percent from 12.82 percent, VWoA cornered 2.47 percent compared with 2.26 percent and AMC slipped to 2.10 percent from 2.50 percent.

Buick and Cadillac were the only U. S. makes to sell more cars than in the year-ago period. Buick was up 13.57 percent, to 13,654 from 12,023, and Cadillac was up 1.68 percent, to 6,064 from 5,964.

GM's other makes fared poorly: Pontiac was down 39.54 percent, Chevrolet was down 36.47 percent and Oldsmobile was down 21.94 percent.

Chrysler was down 30.00 percent, Imperial was down 63.82 percent, Plymouth was down 27.12 percent and Dodge was down 23.71 percent.

Ford sales dropped 47.88 percent, Mercury was down 51.57 percent and Lincoln was down 32.23 percent.

The number-one selling nameplate for the period was Oldsmobile Cutlass (including Supreme) at 5,885 units.

Georgia dealers spurn Hawaii

ATLANTA.—The Georgia Automobile Dealers Assn. has withdrawn from the five-state dealer convention scheduled March 15-22 in Hawaii.

Instead, tentative plans have been arranged for the convention to be held at Innisbrook, Tarpon Springs, Fla., March 28-April 1.

The other states scheduled for the Hawaiian affair are Kentucky, Missouri, Illinois and New Mexico.

State capitol roundup

'Legislative attention' centers on vehicles

By Mary E. Jones
Special Correspondent

In 1981, over 20 perecnt of the 100,000 bills which were introduced in state legislatures related to the motor vehicle industry.

The percentage is even higher if workers compensation, unemployment compensation and insurance bills are added to the list.

According to Donald J. Hill, assistant vice president of Commerce Clearing House, Inc., bills affecting motor vehicles have traditionally been one of the most consistent areas of legislative review over the past few decades. Other areas of intense legislative scrutiny by volume include the insurance industry and all types of taxation.

Motor-vehicle-related areas which are expected to receive legislative attention in 1982 include the following: Manufacturer/dealer franchise relationship, provisions of warranty contracts, mandatory use of child restraints and seat belts, liberalization of truck size and weight limits and mandatory equipment found on the vehicle.

Other areas are: Emissions of pollutants from motor vehicles, mandatory emissions and safety inspection, transportation of hazardous waste, motor fuel and motor vehicle taxes, increased registration fees and effect of plant closing on local economy.

Forty-three states are scheduled to meet in 1982. Only Arkansas, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oregon and Texas are not currently scheduled to meet. Twenty-two of these states will carry over pending 1981 legislation for reconsideration in 1982.

Factors such as a state's economic condition and political balance have an immense relationship to a bill's potential for passage. Industry observers are also watching to see what influence the Reagan Administration's attitude on reduced government regulation of business will have on proposed state legislation.

It is also unknown how proposed cutbacks in federal government spending, a traditional source of revenue for the states, will affect various state programs.

Students of legislative history observe that most issues addressed by federal law were first considered at the state level. These include laws on such issues as fuel economy, air pollution and consumer protection.

Third generation signs

John Poppel Jr., seated, has been appointed a Toyota dealer in Columbia, Mo. He is pictured with his grandfather, Tyson Poppel, chairman of Tyson Buick, Fort Worth, and his father, John Poppel Sr., president of Wellesley Toyota, Wellesley, Mass.

Strategy behind Mitsubishi deal

Hyundai eyes an expanding market

By John Hartley
Staff Correspondent

TOKYO. — In a bid to survive by gaining economy of scale, Hyundai Motors, Seoul, Korea, has negotiated a technology transfer deal with Mitsubishi Motors Corp. (MMC) of Japan.

The plan is to build a factory capable of producing 300,000 front-wheel-drive cars a year in the mid-to-late 1980s.

This will treble Hyundai's capacity, and will give MMC more influence in Korea — one more leg in the Japanese company's ambitious plan to dominate Southeast Asia in terms of motor manufacture.

After rapid growth in the mid-1970s, Korea's auto industry went into a real slump, sales falling by about 30 percent from the peak of 200,000 in 1979.

The slump resulted from high inflation and taxes which reduced domestic demand before the autos were good enough for widespread exports.

The biggest auto company is Hyundai, built from nothing under the guidance of George Turnbull, former BL executive, and now chief of Talbot UK.

Hyundai, part of one of the biggest Korean industrial groups, commissioned Ital Design to design the body of the Pony small car, and bought a license from MMC for engine and transmission designs — the engines are 74 and 85 cubic inches.

Based on a 92-inch wheelbase, the Pony is 156 inches long, and is produced in four-door sedan, hatchback and station wagon form. There is also a small pickup truck.

Hyundai started producing the Pony in 1975, and also makes trucks under license from MMC. Total vehicle production capacity is 140,000 units, the main factory at Ulsan having a capacity of 116,000 passenger cars.

In 1979, some 75,000 passenger cars and 35,000 trucks and buses were produced, but this fell to 62,000 units in 1980.

It is anticipated that 1981 output will be finalized at 78,000— 62,000 passenger cars, and 16,000 trucks and buses. Exports account for about 25,000 cars.

Hyundai's competitors are Saehan Motors, half-owned by GM, and Kia, which has a licensing deal with Toyo Kogyo. Last year, the Korean Government tried to merge Hyundai and Saehan but this proved unsuccessful. Saehan has capacity for 73,000 cars — Isuzu's version of the GM T-car, the Gemini, and the Opel Rekord — and 37,000 trucks and buses of Isuzu design.

Saehan is integrated to some extent into GM's world strategy, and is scheduled to supply GM Australia with diesel engines, these being the Opel units.

It is also expected to build the GM J-car in due course, but at present is working well below capacity, as is Kia, which builds the Mazda GLC of two models ago — a very old-fashioned design.

All the Korean companies are keen to modernize and improve the level of their technology, and Hyundai has chosen MMC as its partner, presumably because it had previous experience of working with the Japanese company.

Under the deal, MMC will supply technical help in manufacture and design of engines and transaxles for front-wheel-drive cars and also exhaust emission equipment.

It has not been confirmed

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Hatchback from Hyundai

Hyundai Pony boasts a hatchback body styled by Ital Design and an engine and transmission built under license from Mitsubishi. The main factory has an annual capacity of 116,000 passenger cars, but the company hopes to hike this to 300,000 in the mid-to-late 1980s.

Longbottom, Neal Paxson named to NADA posts

McLEAN, Va. — NADA has announced three staff appointments.

Penelope Longbottom has been named director of media and consumer affairs; David S. Paxson has been appointed director of the NADA American Truck Dealers Division, and Jack C. Neal has been named head of the NADA Publications Policy Board.

Longbottom has been with NADA since 1977, most recently as press secretary. Before that, she headed the Automotive Consumer Action Program (AUTOCAP). In her new post, she will again be responsible for AUTOCAP expansion and development.

Paxson formerly was manager of the competitive analysis section of the Assn. of American Railroads. At NADA, he will be responsible for expansion of the 1,500 - truck - member division. Under his direction, ATD will analyze economic events affecting the sales and demand for medium and heavy-duty trucks.

Neal has been with NADA since 1970. In addition to his new duties, he will continue as executive director of the Automobility Foundation, a nonprofit organization supported by auto dealers and manufacturers to promote personal mobility by motor vehicle.

Illinois to sell bonds to help Chrysler survive

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Bonds amounting to $20 million are to be offered for sale so that the amount pledged to Chrysler Corp. by the State of Illinois can be paid to the corporation.

Gov. James R. Thompson and State Treasurer Jerome Cosentino said the pledge was made when Chrysler put together its loan guarantee package. The State legislature passed an appropriation for $20 million, but the governor never signed the papers. The approval by the General Assembly lapsed on June 30.

Now bonds will be sold by the Industrial Development Authority. Thompson explained that his action was planned to assure that the Belvidere (Ill.) Chrysler plant continues to operate.

Thompson said the loan would earn more interest than the state would get by putting the money in banks. Chrysler eventually will have to pay $1.32 million in interest over the life of the loan, it has been estimated.

The Chrysler plant, worth $50 million, is being put up as collateral. The minimum interest rate on the loan will be 15¾ percent, but it could rise if the prime rate does.

SBA backing of dealer loans rises for year

WASHINGTON.—Times were tough a year ago and the Carter Administration took time to hold an auto summit.

All kinds of specific proposals were made, but Congress never enacted them.

What did happen, however, was important to dealers.

During fiscal 1980, the Small Business Administration backed 1,136 dealer loans worth $223.3 million. During fiscal 1981, 1,303 loans worth $261.5 million were backed by SBA, and there is some evidence that the government backing helped loosen bank credit for dealers.

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57th year — No. 4896

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Dowdy opens

AMBRIDGE, Pa. — James L. Dowdy has opened Jim Dowdy Oldsmobile-Cadillac here.

Particulate standard not warranted now, Academy study says

Go slow on diesel rule, EPA told

By Jake Kelderman
Washington Bureau Staff

WASHINGTON.—A new study by the National Academy of Sciences suggests the EPA might take a new approach to regulating particulate emissions from diesels.

The academy, which had been asked to look into the problems of dieselization in the U. S., suggests in a study to be sent to EPA, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and the Departments of Transportation and Energy that EPA postpone the 1985 diesel particulate standard for light - duty vehicles pending further developments in diesel technology and that it give serious consideration to controlling particulate emissions from heavy-duty diesels imposing stricter nitrogen oxide controls on gasoline-powered vehicles and setting minimum specifications for diesel fuels.

The academy report says the 1985 particulate standard of 0.2 grams per mile is not warranted now because it is not cost-effective. "Only a relatively small number of diesel-powered cars will be made and sold in the

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U. S. Circuit Court rules against state

Leasing industry wins tax battle in California

By Francis J. Gawronski

The Ninth U. S. Circuit Court in San Francisco has ruled against the State of California and in favor of the vehicle leasing industry in a long-standing controversy on the application of sales taxes.

The California Franchise Tax Board has long irritated leasing company executives by its insistence that a lease of "tangible personal property" to a federal government agency was subject to the state's sales tax and that dealers who enter into such leases should be audited as well as taxed.

The federal court, however, has now ruled that the incidence of the tax is on the U. S. and is in violation of the immunity from state taxation which the U. S. Constitution grants to the federal government.

Stephen F. Snow, executive vice president, Northern California Motor Car Dealers Assn., is now urging members and lessors who have paid the tax, under protest, to file claims for refunds.

"Such claims," Snow said, "generally must be filed within three years from the due date of the return on which the tax was paid or six months from the due date of any deficiency assessed by the tax board.

"However," Snow said, "if the state appeals this court decision, dealers filing claims should also consider asking that the tax board hold their claims in abeyance pending the outcome of such an appeal."

Elsewhere in the leasing industry, Associates Leasing, Inc., Rolling Meadows, Ill., a division of Associates Commercial Corp., has purchased the corporate fleet leasing accounts of Dobbs Fleet Leasing, Inc., Memphis.

The acquisition brings the total number of cars under lease with Associates to more than 10,000 nationwide, and the number of trucks to more than 3,000 units.

Dobbs Leasing, which maintained four regional offices in the Midwest, Southwest and West, will continue its fleet operations in Memphis on a regional basis. Associates Leasing operates five regional offices nationwide, in addition to its Chicago-area headquarters.

The California Vehicle Leasing Assn., Los Angeles, has changed its name to Western Vehicle Leasing Assn. (WVLA).

"The change signifies the dramatic growth which is occuring in the leasing industry at present," said Bruce Williams of Snider Leasing, Sacramento, and WVLA president.

"We, as a group, feel that the association should grow and change with the times and that dealers, independents, brokers and bankers can all share the benefits of belonging."

Tom Halpin has been named director of fleet management services at Wheels, Inc., Chicago.

With nearly nine years' experience at Wheels, Halpin has assumed responsibility for supervision and coordination of programs for maintenance management, reimbursement and statistical reporting.

The following personnel changes have occurred within the Truck Rental and Leasing Division, Lend Lease, Minneapolis:

Edward Priest has joined the company as business manager in Miami; Royal Myers has been named rental manager in Sacramento; Charlie Allen has been appointed assistant manager in Orlando, Fla., and Sandra Huffman has been promoted to rental manager in Baltimore.

factories list auction dates

American Motors

Jan. 5—D-A Auto Auction, New Stanton, Pa.; Ohio Auto Auction, Columbus, O.

Jan. 6 — Minneapolis Auto Auction, Minneapolis, Minn.

Jan. 7—Evansville Auto Auction, Evansville, Ind.; Todd Auto Auction, Telford, Pa.

Jan. 13—Dallas Auto Auction, Grand Prairie, Tex.; Central States Auto Auction, Mason City, Ia.; Southern Auto Auction, Warehouse Point, Conn.; Sand Mountain Auto Auction, Boaz, Ala.

Jan. 14—Atlanta Auto Auction, Red Oak, Ga.; Golden Gate Auto Auction, Fremont, Calif.

Jan. 15—Floyd Hauhe Auto Auction, Bridgeton, Mo.; Concord Auto Auction, Acton, Mass.

Model breakdown

Auction Averages

	DECEMBER	NOVEMBER*	OCTOBER
1981	$6,424	$6,689	$7,074
1980	5,363	5,454	5,697
1979	4,321	4,657	4,922
1978	3,475	3,782	3,731
1977	2,590	2,733	2,927
1976	2,026	2,099	2,140
1975	1,361	1,562	1,628
1974	1,130	1,166	1,258
Overall Average	$4,117	$4,315	$4,364

*revised

Used car sales

Auction Averages

Decembe[illegible]	$4,117
Month ago	$4,315
Year ago	$3,589

Ford steel mill to get relief on pollution rule

WASHINGTON. — Ford Motor Co. will be among the first of the nation's steel companies to get relief from air pollution control requirements under legislation passed by Congress.

EPA Administrator Anne Gorsuch said recently the firm's Rouge River steel plant will be given until 1985 to meet air-pollution requirements that will force the company to spend some $10.5 million in modernizing the plant's No. 2 Tandem Mill and its pickle lines. The original compliance deadline was 1982.

The stretchout for compliance was authorized by Congress in recognition of the steel industry's precarious financial condition and its need to become competitive with foreign producers.

Threads to treads

Former haberdashery salesman William McCormick, right, Al Schwartz Pontiac, West Mifflin, Pa., has been named Master Salesman of the Year for 1980 in Pontiac's Pittsburgh zone. He receives an award from Charles G. Lloyd, zone business manager. The award is presented to a single new-car salesperson once each calendar year.

GM purchasing posts for Vickery, Kraemer

DETROIT.—Sharlene A. Vickery has been given responsibility for General Motors Corporate Staff purchasing. She has been with GM since 1967, most recently as a staff administrator for the Materials Management Staff.

Robert W. Kraemer has been named to head regional development and expansion activities for indirect material procurement. He has been with GM since 1950, most recently serving in Detroit Regional Purchasing Activities.

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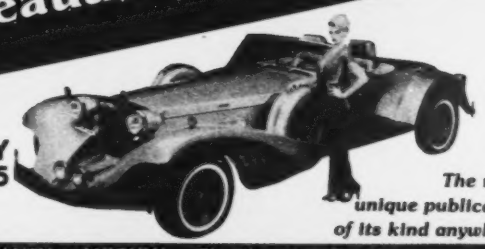

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Speed controls also gain favor on '81 models

Buyers tilting toward tilt wheels

By Joseph Bohn
Marketing Editor

Tilt wheel, tilt and telescope and speed control options continued to gain popularity on '81 domestic cars, according to an AUTOMOTIVE NEWS survey.

Some observers feel that tilt wheel is well suited to smaller cars because it facilitates driver entry and exit, and that it will continue gaining acceptance on those autos.

The combination tilt and telescope, however, appears to have a limited future, being confined mainly to higher-priced or larger cars. General Motors is the only company still offering this combination.

Speed controls improved their penetration, and the slow, albeit steady, growth which has characterized them.

Industrywide, there were 2,806,567 tilt and tilt and telescope options installed in '81 models, up from 2,493,126 in '80. Penetration increased to 41.53 percent from 34.89 percent in '80.

• A breakdown shows that tilt wheel alone went into 2,486,775 cars, equal to 36.80 percent of production. It was up at Ford Motor and General Motors, down at Chrysler and American Motors. Volkswagen doesn't offer tilt wheel.

No exact breakdown of tilt wheel versus tilt and telescope was made in previous years. However, AMC, Ford and Chrysler offered only tilt wheel in '80 and '81.

And year-to-year comparison indicate that AMC's installations dropped to 30.30 percent of output, equal to 41,584 units. That was down from 31.31 percent, or 61,947 in '80.

Chrysler's installations dropped to 97,765, or 13.33 percent of output. That was off from 112,908, or 14.75 percent in '80.

Ford Motor's installations jumped to 376,421, or 25.03 percent of company output. That was up from 283,886, or 20.67 percent.

General Motors installed tilt wheel on 1,971,041 cars, equal to 46.88 percent of its production. Additionally, it installed tilt and telescope on 319,792 cars, or 7.61 percent of output.

The combined GM installations of 2,290,833, or 54.49 percent, compared with 2,034,385 adjustable steering columns, equal to 44.37 percent of GM output, installed in '80 models.

• Speed controls, or Cruise Control, ended up on 37.27 percent of the '81 domestic cars, or 2,518,705 vehicles. That was up from 31.99 percent, or 2,286,091 in '80.

GM's penetration climbed to 43.79 percent from 36.67 percent in '80. GM made the option available on its J-series (Cavalier / J-200 / Cimarron) which helped boost the '81 total.

(The cars, officially on sale as '82s, were late '81 model production entries.)

Altogether, GM installed Cruise Control in 1,841,018 cars, up from 1,681,497 in '80.

Ford Motor installed the speed control device in 34.13 percent of its cars, equal to 513,225 vehicles. That was up from a 29.44 percent penetration, or 404,439 vehicles in '80.

Ford, too, made the option newly available on Escort, Lynx, EXP, LN7 and Capri.

Chrysler installed the option in 20.04 percent of its cars, equal to 146,971 units. That was down from 22.28 percent, or 171,261 in '80.

AMC installed the item in 12.76 percent of its cars, equal to 17,491 units. That was off from 14.60 percent, or 28,894 in '80.

Volkswagen doesn't offer the option.

1980 traffic deaths steady at 45,000

WASHINGTON. — Traffic fatalities in 1980 totaled 45,271 — virtually unchanged from the 45,212 recorded in 1979, DOT reported in a new release. Pedestrian deaths (15.8 percent of the '80 total) and motorcycle deaths (10.0 percent) were included in the total.

The fatality rate per mile rose 1.2 percent over the 1979 level, to 3.38 deaths per 100 million miles. Of the total, 27,433 deaths were occupants of cars. The autos involved in these deaths broke down as follows: Two-seaters, 4 percent; subcompact, 26 percent; compacts, 22 percent; midsize, 21 percent; fullsize, 25 percent, and unknown/other, 2 percent.

Steering Wheel, Speed Control Options on 1981 U. S. Models

	Tilt Wheel	Percent of Output	Tilt and Telescope	Percent of Output	Speed Control	Percent of Output
AMERICAN MOTORS	41,548	30.30	.....	.....	17,491	12.76
Spirit	6,854	15.40	.....	.....	831	1.90
Concord	17,004	30.90	.....	.....	9,538	17.30
Eagle	9,816	67.80	.....	.....	5,939	41.00
SX/4	7,874	34.30	.....	.....	1,183	5.20
CHRYSLER CORP.	97,765	13.33	.....	.....	146,971	20.04
C-P Total	62,656	14.86	.....	.....	93,167	22.10
Horizon	.....	.....	.....	.....	5,777	6.60
Reliant	29,074	14.20	.....	.....	45,454	22.20
TC-3	.....	.....	.....	.....	3,710	7.10
Gran Fury	1,425	18.40	.....	.....	790	10.20
Cordoba	13,190	65.00	.....	.....	13,190	65.00
LeBaron	10,937	28.50	.....	.....	14,967	39.00
Chrysler	8,030	75.90	.....	.....	9,279	87.70
Dodge Total	35,109	11.25	.....	.....	53,804	17.25
Omni	.....	.....	.....	.....	4,488	6.90
D24	.....	.....	.....	.....	3,537	7.10
Aries	21,999	13.90	.....	.....	33,236	21.00
Diplomat	6,049	28.20	.....	.....	4,311	20.10
Mirada	5,509	46.30	.....	.....	6,592	55.40
St. Regis	1,552	28.10	.....	.....	1,640	29.70
FORD MOTOR	376,421	25.03	.....	.....	513,225	34.13
Ford Division	187,048	18.30	.....	.....	282,290	27.62
Escort	.....	.....	.....	.....	41,053	12.80
EXP	.....	.....	.....	.....	15,436	21.60
Fairmont	15,922	9.90	.....	.....	33,935	21.10
Must./Must II	17,709	9.70	.....	.....	21,542	11.80
Granada	52,055	42.90	.....	.....	49,143	40.50
T-Bird	57,911	66.80	.....	.....	62,246	71.80
Ford	43,451	55.60	.....	.....	58,925	75.40
L-M Division	189,373	39.29	.....	.....	230,935	47.91
Lynx	.....	.....	.....	.....	15,229	13.60
Capri	7,191	12.20	.....	.....	8,724	14.80
Zephyr	8,779	13.20	.....	.....	21,748	32.70
Cougar	24,841	46.30	.....	.....	27,095	50.50
XR-7	27,285	73.20	.....	.....	27,360	73.40
Mercury	52,824	85.70	.....	.....	57,570	93.40
LN7	.....	.....	.....	.....	4,493	20.00
Lincoln	31,755	96.70	.....	.....	32,018	97.50
Mark VI	36,698	100.00	.....	.....	36,696	100.00
GENERAL MOTORS	1,971,041	46.88	319,792	7.61	1,841,018	43.79
Buick Division	537,899	62.77	25,864	3.02	473,803	55.29
Skylark	109,667	42.10	.....	.....	90,882	34.90
LeSabre	67,670	75.90	3,143	3.50	69,365	77.80
Century	82,623	57.30	.....	.....	78,600	54.50
Regal	165,200	68.80	.....	.....	119,030	49.60
Electra	68,983	100.00	16,443	23.80	66,330	96.20
Riviera	43,756	84.10	6,278	12.10	49,596	95.40
Cadillac Division	14,986	5.94	227,512	90.19	70,403	27.91
Cimarron	14,986	92.40	.....	.....	4,652	28.70
Seville	.....	.....	28,606	100.00	8,884	31.10
Eldorado	.....	.....	59,122	97.60	16,184	26.70
Cadillac	.....	.....	139,784	93.80	40,683	27.30
Chevrolet Division	505,181	30.19	45,631	2.73	426,312	25.48
Chevette	39,950	8.80	.....	.....	.....	.....
Cavalier	20,516	31.50	.....	.....	2,345	3.60
Camaro	75,392	59.80	.....	.....	40,919	32.40
Citation	98,534	23.80	.....	.....	76,566	18.50
Malibu	68,472	30.20	.....	.....	71,646	31.60
Monte Carlo	90,027	57.30	.....	.....	77,301	49.20
Chevrolet	112,290	60.70	.....	.....	120,985	65.40
Corvette	.....	.....	45,631	100.00	36,550	80.10
Oldsmobile Division	607,645	64.60	20,785	2.21	619,830	65.89
Omega	52,235	35.30	.....	.....	45,523	30.70
Cutlass	109,974	56.10	.....	.....	123,050	62.80
Cutlass Supreme	193,366	67.60	.....	.....	171,293	59.90
Oldsmobile	217,788	81.00	14,372	5.30	238,722	88.80
Toronado	34,282	80.40	6,413	15.00	41,242	96.80
Pontiac Division	305,330	63.47	.....	.....	250,670	52.11
Firebird	52,251	73.70	.....	.....	32,021	45.20
Phoenix	50,924	39.80	.....	.....	31,202	24.40
Grand Prix	81,150	74.90	.....	.....	71,832	66.30
LeMans	36,190	50.30	.....	.....	31,441	43.70
Pontiac	84,815	83.10	.....	.....	84,174	82.50
VOLKSWAGEN	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total Cars, U. S.	2,486,775	36.80	319,792	4.73	2,518,705	37.27

Note: Figures are generally based on U. S. production. However, Canadian-only sourced cars, such as Cordoba-Mirada, are included in some instances; also, some '82-only models, such as EXP/LN7 and Cimarron and Cavalier, built during the '81 model run.

Figures are based on production of 6,758,283 '81 models, including 4,204,064 GM cars, 1,503,946 Ford cars, 733,513 Chrysler models, 137,125 AMC and 179,635 Volkswagens.

GM's total includes 856,996 Buicks, 252,256 Cadillacs, 1,673,093 Chevrolets, 940,654 Oldsmobiles, and 481,065 Pontiacs. Ford's total includes 1,021,945 Ford Division and 482,001 Lincoln-Mercury models. Chrysler's total includes 421,525 Chrysler-Plymouths and 311,988 Dodges.

NOTE

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